# I Didn't Say That

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The title for this book is borrowed from Ginger Palmer's poem on page 12.

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# I Didn't Say That

DISCARD

## WRITING BY STUDENTS & TEACHERS IN THE SCHOOLS OF MONTANA 1981-1982

Montana Arts Council Program
Poets & Writers in Schools Program

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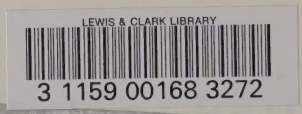


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DISCARD

## THE MAGIC MATCH BOX

Throw into the match box
the heart of a queen,
you'll pull out a chest of gold.

Throw in your imagination
you'll get forever happiness.

Throw in a day of happiness
you'll get the happiness for another day.

You shall have
what you need to live.

Throw in your soul
you'll get everything you need.

Throw in your soul and body,
you don't need to live.

You shall die if you're greedy.

You shall have what you need to live.

*Leola Resser*
*Graff Elementary*
*Laurel*

I hear the birds sing to me.
A red fox comes near by.
Rabbits come to sit.
I don't feel lonely.

*Ember Salveson*
*Plentywood Elementary*

If I was the last person on the earth
I would go up north and hunt for a month
or longer if possible. And after that I would
go to all the stores in Glasgow and get all the guns
and have a war against myself and play doctor.

*Dennis Lee Barnett*
*Frazer Elementary*
*Frazer*

When you catch a rainbow trout
when nobody else is catching anything
your heart feels like it's floating.

*Nick Olds*
*East Junior High*
*Great Falls*

## THE IMPRISONED, TECHNICOLOR SELF-PORTRAIT

A day-glo, screaming green
trampled with dust
froo a thousand trips through gray.

An African green,
a Cheetah's blur
streaking through chaotic happiness.

A watercolor green
being run through an unfriendly hotel rain
under the neon green of "No Vacancy."

A boppy, dancy green
sung to the distorted squiggle of noise.

An hallucinated green
dripped like candle wax
on a black and white checkered floor.

The green in you
separated and lost from me
by a pair of shined, but broken, scissors.

*Dale Flattum*
*Bozeman Sr. High*
*Bozeman*

## BLUE RIBBONS

Life is like a blue ribbon
a blue ribbon is like pain
pain is like red wrestling
red wrestling is like crying
crying is like pale faces
pale faces are like friends
and friends are like blue ribbons.

*David Grover*
*Pine Butte Elementary*
*Colstrip*

## THE FOREST

As I walk through the forest
in the summer I see moss on the rocks
and I hear the rocks crack.
But in the winter I go through the blue snow.
And in the fall I hear all of my footsteps
going crunch, crunch on the dried leaves.
But most of all I like it in the spring
all the moss and flower buds,
how the snow fades away.

*Kristin Stine*
*Bigfork Elementary*
*Bigfork*

## POETRY IS LIKE . . .

a rose with a bee in it
and a monkey swinging from a meatball
with macaroni and cheese in his hand.
It is like me made of words.
It is like five dead fish in a fish tank
and a banana in my ear
and a fish up my nose
like the rubber hose I put up there last year.

*Sonny Wilke*
*Deer Park Elementary*
*Columbia Falls*

## SHEPHERD VILLANELLE

Shepherd, Main Street a quartermile long,
a post office, a bar and a store.
Mad Jack drives his bus like a wildman.

The sweet sick smell of silage,
horses running along the street,
Shepherd, Main Street a quartermile long.

This place could be a loner's dream,
but we have no loners, just drunks and gossip.
Mad Jack drives his bus like a wildman.

The feedlot shines through the dust
that the cattle have kicked up.
Shepherd, Main Street a quartermile long.

Three-legged dog lies by the single gas pump,
Children lazily float sticks through the culvert.
Mad Jack drives his bus like a wildman.

Shepherd, a small but growing town,
a place to be alone in the sun.
Shepherd, Main Street a quartermile long.
Mad Jack drives his bus like a wildman.

*Collaborative poem*
*Shepherd High School*
*Shepherd*

Plentywood is as fun as an 88 year old lady's sex life.

*Scott O'Toole*
*Plentywood High*
*Plentywood*

## RUMBLE

The clink of my shoes on the concrete
made me wonder

The dark black sky staring at us
in thought

As we travel along the street
I can smell the rotten egg smell of the smog

The snow has disappeared like
our good nature

The light in my mind is burning
when we come to the spot where it is to happen
but no one is there

*Candi Seitz*
*Plains Jr. High*
*Plains*

Through the keyhole
I see a five hundred pound man.
Through the man I see
nothing but fat.
Hidden by the door
I cannot see anything
because of all his fat.
But I see his fat
flowing from right
to left and up and down
shading the room with nothing
but blubber.

*Martha Bell*
*Paris Gibson Jr. High*
*Great Falls*

## THE OLD MAN

As I look out our living room window
I see the old man taking his daily walk
his skin is like a wadded piece of paper
his hair like a patch of moth balls—
all white and out of place. I feel sorry
for this old man, no family, no friends,
and nothing to live for. As I watch him pass
I wonder if I will ever live like him.

*David Worstell*
*Havre Jr. High*
*Havre*

## WE USED TO LIVE BY A HILL

My mom would tell me not to go down the hill
or I would never come back. There was an old man
who would catch me and make soup out of me
and eat me. I stayed away from the hill.
My friends said I was a big chicken,
because I was afraid to go down and tease the old man.
So me and my friends went down there and threw rocks
at the old man's house. When the door opened,
the old man came out and chased us. He grabbed
my friend and took her into the house. I ran home
and told my mother. She went to see if my friend
was down there, and she was. The old man
wouldn't let her go until she cleaned his house.

*Carla Culbertson*
*Poplar High School*
*Poplar*

## MY GREAT GRANDPARENTS' BACK YARD

A yellow butterfly flying through the air.
Palm leaves high on trees, waving in the warm breeze.
Warm sun glaring off of my blonde hair.
Rich grass under me
An old-fashioned red pump sits on a box of rocks
A blue sky with patches of smog
that can be overlooked if I try hard enough.
A lemon tree in the distance
with fruit that is ready to be picked
A virgin house surrounded by red and orange flowers
The fragrance is enough to sweep any bumble bee off its feet.
Robins flying back and forth between the willow tree, washing
themselves in the bird bath.
Water comes flying off the birds. They
shake their delicate feathers.
The rough fence is good for my itchy back.
I feel smooth stones in the base of the pumphouse.

*Sharon Esther*
*Bozeman Sr. High*
*Bozeman*

## THE MORNING

I woke up in the morning
with a blasted headache
and go the the cabinet
to get an aspirin
there isn't any left.

I go to school
and it won't go away
it hurts like your finger's been cut off
you have a miserable day.

*Darrin Marsh*
*Plentywood Elementary*
*Plentywood*

## MY DOG

He ate green food,
my dog is green.
What is his name,
his name is Max.

My dog is green
when he dances.
His name is Max
when he cries.

When he dances
he needs music,
when he cries
he needs quiet.

He needs music
because he is a clown,
he needs quiet
because he is silent.

Because he is a clown
he ate green food,
because he is silent
his name is Max.

*Adele Snyder*
*Isabel Bills Elementary*
*Colstrip*

I did not do it, I promise,
he did it.
I don't have it, he has it.
I didn't do anything to you, no sir.
Owls are made out of sticks.
I didn't say that.

*Ginger Palmer*
*Bigfork Elementary*
*Bigfork*

## ODE TO MY NOSE

Oh nose, you look like a mountain
with two big caves.
You sound like the wind
when you sneeze.
Or a frog calling a mermaid.

*Ms. Brown's Second Grade Class*
*Paxson Elementary School*
*Missoula*

(1) I feel stupid when I fall down the steps
(2) I get mad when I see the sun and
know I'll never shine like that
(3) I'm scared when someone I know
is going to die
(4) I get angry because I can't
tell the difference between
a cotton tree and a redwood.
(5) I'm happy when I smell the air
right after it's rained
(6) I like to bash in people's snowmen

*Shelley Sullivan*
*Havre Jr. High*
*Havre*

## UMBRELLA HOUSE

Umbrellas levitate on top
of the garage. Each having room
for the roundness of their hats.
The flowing breeze cannot make
them fall over. The curved foot
on each of them hold sturdily
to spiked nails implanted
on the roof.
Desert surrounds the shack-like structure
and the tiny child who used to live
under my umbrellas is now dead.
Nothing to eat.
But she is still shaded from the sun.
She is not fenced in on the roof.
But she is still unable to leave.

*Lonnie Rassley*
*Belgrade High*
*Belgrade*

## TRANSFORMATION INTO A DEAD FISH

All of the sudden
my skull exploded
and tiny dancing fireflies
burnt holes
into my soggy head

my eyes swam furiously
toward
my ears

which had shriveled up
into holes of darkness

my skin grew red & irritable
and scales of color
popped out

and I flew through
the engulfing water

as a fish struck dead

*Carl Olson*
*Plains Jr. High*
*Plains*

## SUSPENSE

Suspense is hunting ducks
in the prairie marsh, the color
murky green. It's the touch
of a loaded gun and the taste
of a stale sandwich and the smell
of a dusty road on a windy summer
day, the sound of a raging
storm approaching.

*Kevin Buckles*
*Poplar High School*
*Poplar*

## BROCKWAY

Since losing its county seat
to Circle, the bank is now the only bar.
From its safe a man with three cases of Bud
lurches toward his wife, her face
a cirrhotic map. It's 10 A.M.

Two ranchers. One nurses his third
Boilermaker. The other, wheat growing from the cuffs
of his jeans, is mesmerized by the slot machine.
We order Bloody Marys and ask the way
to Turtle Lake. Outside it's raining.
The roads are slime. We stay.

*David Dale*
*Teacher*
*Ronan High School*
*Ronan*

## WHY? . . .

Taller than most,
Shorter if she cut her hair

a waving black mountain of silky softness,
twenty four inches of dead protein fibers,

black as soot, but shiny.
Why, then, do they call her Amber?

It's her eyes.

*David Ferguson*
*Helena High*
*Helena*

## ONE DAY WHEN I WAS PLAYING IN THE BACKYARD

My friend Fred ran across the grass
and just disappeared. I looked
for him for about an hour,
then gave up. I went in the house
and told my mom, but she wouldn't believe me.
So I went out in the yard and ran
in the same place Fred ran and then I woke up
in bed the next day. My mom said I was found
lying on the grass right next to Fred
with a hundred dollars in my pocket.

*Phil Ault*
*Poplar High School*
*Poplar*

I go under water to be alone.
It's like I'm in a world of my own
except for the roots of all sizes and shapes
dangling above like a crate full of snakes.

*Kipp Heppner*
*Pine Butte Elementary*
*Colstrip*

We are only birds with malformed wings
flying in circles continually,
preferring wine over whiskey
like a bunch of fairies
on a fabulously cold day.
We hit clouds
the size of Terexes
yet we feel no pain.
And those poor cattle,
all they do is graze all day.
Some guys have all the luck.
We have control
unlike rabbits
who do whatever comes naturally.
Of course
we can't bite
like snakes
who bite at will.

*Robert Hileman*
*Belgrade High*
*Belgrade*

## EXTRAS

When I was four or five years old
I had the idea that I was the only
real human. Everyone else was put
on earth for my purpose. I thought
they were part of some big scientific
experiment and I was the guinea pig.
No one else had any feelings.
Everywhere I went was just a big stage.
For example: when I visited Chicago
with my parents, they set up the city
just for my benefit and when I left
they tore it down. If my parents
left me with my brother, as soon
as they said goodbye they came back
to look at me through a one-way
mirror in the living room.

*Peter Ruffatto*
*Poplar High School*
*Poplar*

## MARVIN

Once I had a fish; his name was Marvin.
Marvin was a funny fish; he did funny tricks.
On a sunny day I was doing cartwheels, handstands,
headstands, and highjumps. I went in.
I put some food in the tank.
All of a sudden Marvin sank. I wondered
what happened. My dad said Marvin was dead.
That night I sat in bed thinking about me
standing on a concrete floor with Marvin.

*Misti Lynn Bowles*
*Riverview Elementary*
*Great Falls*

## MY BODY

My heart is a tender jar
that hardly breathes.

*Denise Loveridge*
*Isabel Bills Elementary*
*Colstrip*

I can remember when I go to empty the ashes.
I can see the full moon creeping
over the trees, and as I dump the hot ashes
out they form a figure in the snow.
As the gray smoke drifts up towards the moon
there is an eerie feeling inside me.
And as I leave I can hear the hot ashes
on the snow, melting it away.

*Stephen Creekmore*
*Monforton Elementary*
*Bozeman*

## STACKING HAY

Always make that first tier
just so.
Figuring to the last bale
for the perfect size.
Pushing that bale running to grab
another.
Hurrying faster
that monster of a farmhand is
bringing another load.
The second tier is beginning.
I am at the top of the stack.
It is windy on the fourteenth tier.

*Philip Gyger*
*Sweet Grass County High*
*Big Timber*

## MYTHS, LEGENDS AND FAIRYTALES

The students of Helena Junior High School wrote myths, legends and fairytales which they bound into books for elementary school children. The prose pieces which follow were taken from those workshops.

*Sandra Alcosser*

### WHY THE DONKEY HAS LONG DROOPY EARS

Once upon a time, in the long, long ago when the old, old world was a very young world indeed, there were no people living on the earth. The earth had only three forms: the land, the endless sea, and the forever forest. Now, the land was just like the land that you and I know today, but the sea and forest were different. The sea was endless. If you sailed, and sailed forever, you'd never reach the same point, unless you turned around, and the forest went on forever and you could walk forever, but you'd never reach the same point again unless you turned around.

Now, the only beings to enjoy this magical place were the animals, and the Lord of Animals. The Lord was tall, not a human, but human-like with his grey beard and hair, and his long, flowing golden silk robe and staff.

One day, the Lord threw a party and invited everyone he knew. That is, *almost* everyone he knew. You see, the turtle was too tired to come, and the giraffe's neck hurt, and the Lord had heard that the donkey was sick. But, even though the turtle *was* tired, and the giraffe's neck *did* hurt, the donkey *wasn't* sick, and he knew all about the party—especially that *he* wasn't invited.

This donkey was not like the donkey that there is today. Oh, yes, he had a light brown coat, brown eyes, and a black tail, but his ears were very short and stood straight up, like a cat's. He was also very stubborn.

When he found out that he wasn't invited to the party, he got mad and ran deep into the forever forest.

The Lord went looking for him to explain what had happened, but the donkey hid among the trees and because his coat matched the color of the bark, the Lord couldn't find him.

So the Lord went back to his house which was a rock in the middle of the endless sea and here he thought about how to get the donkey out of the forest. This is where the statue, "The Thinker" comes from. He decided to use big, green palm leaves to lure the donkey out of the forest so he could go back into the rock to work for the Lord.

He took the leaves to the edge of the forest and left.

The donkey came out and ate them and felt so content and peaceful (but mostly *full*), that he fell asleep.

The Lord came back and woke the donkey and started to tell him about the party, but the donkey took one look at the Lord and ran. The Lord grabbed the first thing he could and held on.

And do you know what he grabbed? He grabbed his *ears!* And so the donkey pulled and the Lord pulled and between the two of them, they stretched those ears halfway into the endless sea and halfway into the forever forest.

Do you know what half and half is? Why, it's one whole, so they must have stretched his ears *one whole forever!*

Well, wouldn't you know it, but the Lord sneezed a big, big, supernatural sneeze, and let go of the ears; the donkey fell back, and the stretching was over. So the donkey gathered up his ears and walked as far into the forever forest as he could, although you and I know that couldn't be far in a forever forest, could it?

And to this very day, the donkey is still stubborn about going into the water, and everything else a human, or human-like being asks him. And, although his ears are not so long anymore, they are still long and droopy.

*Kammie Morrison*
*Helena Jr. High School*
*Helena*

## VLADIMIR D'SCHLEPPE IN CHECKERBOARD, MONTANA

### Adventure I: The Case of the Hyper-Hampsters

The small, furry animal was curled in the corner of its caged confinement, and the only hint that it was alive, and not just a ball of fur, was the quickly-paced movement of the muscles of its white abdomen. Standing over it was Vladimir D'Schleppe, scientist, writer, merchant, inventor, stock owner, president of the Mass Beefalo Production Corporation, Chairman of the Chicken Embryo Right-to-Life Movement, and the list goes on and on.

Vladimir was a well-liked, well-to-do, cheerful man with a fiery red beard and mustache. He had a European accent and loved fine wines, French pizzas and pumpernickel bread. He dressed in European clothing, but his timing was a little off, for he looked like some guy who popped out of the nineteenth century.

His mind was the mind of a genius. He had invented thousands of things like the no-tooth gum-brush, self-applying false ear lobes for those with cauliflower ears, the silent radio, the bald-person's comb, no-lense glasses, and his most famous invention, the Hyper Hampster fluid, which he was now testing.

Vladimir held a tube of yellow liquid with red swirls in it over Sleepy, the white hampster. He slowly rotated the test tube so that a drop of the fluid, and no more, would touch the hampster.

KER-POOF!!!! The hampster opened his eyes, breathed fire, and shot out of the cage like a cat out of a microwave. The metal bars of the cage promptly gave way to the force of Sleepy traveling at well over 200 miles per hour.

The poor hampster shot out of the laboratory, flew outside, and continued flying until it reached Chesstown. Vladimir jumped into his red, hampster-powered Volkswagen, and reached Chesstown in a few hours.

"Excuse me, have you seen a flying hampster come by here?" Vladimir asked a bartender.

"Listen bud, I don't know what you drink where you come from, but flying hampsters around here are about as likely as a smart person in Washington. No, I haven't seen any flying hampsters around here. The only flying thing I know of is your brain, mister, and I sure haven't seen IT!! So either buy a drink or take a trip to Warm Springs, because . . ."

Just then a crazy-looking man in a blue and green suit came staggering into the bar. "Auroogeeluook!!" he screamed. "The Russians have attacked!! They've nuked us. We're doomed!!"

The bartender buried his head in his hands; he had seen too many drunks that day. Vladimir stepped outside. When he looked up he saw a long red streak of smoke heading straight for the town. Because of his superior vision, mainly due to his Super Contacts, he noticed that it was not a Russian missile at the tip of the trail in the sky, but it was rather, as Vladimir had expected, a poor, white hampster, about as scared as a fish in a nuclear power plant. As it got nearer, there was a high-pitched sound. And then a flash. Vladimir jumped in his Hampstocar and putted off toward the sight of the flash, explosion or whatever.

When he arrived, twenty minutes later, there was no one within the area. There was a temporary fence around a twenty-five foot crater, which Vladimir guessed was caused by the immediate impact of the hampster's traveling at about a thousand miles per hour. He flew over the fence, with the help of his anti-gravity orthopedic shoe soles. He landed in the crater, about fifteen feet below the surface. At the same instant he heard a blood-curdling yell, the yell of the most savage and ferocious creature that ever lived.

He looked up. It was his fault this had happened, and he had to stop it. The gigantic hampster stared at him, showed its huge, blood-encrusted teeth and ran off.

Off to Checkertown!!! If I created it, Vladimir thought, then I'm the only person who can stop it. No hampster of mine is going to destroy Montana! But how? How in the world was he going to kill the largest, most ferocious, man-eating hampster in the universe? Simple! Just create the largest, most ferocious, hampster-eating cat in the universe.

Vladimir arrived at his home at 7:00 P.M., and turned on the television (which was run by a hampster-powered electric generator) and watched the news.

"The giant hampster is proceeding west toward Helena, at a rate of about 100 miles an hour, and has been for the past half-hour. The main reason for this incredible speed is due to the hampster's unusual ability to fly.... More in the news, Nancy Reagan broke a piece of china!"

Vladimir switched off the set and brought out a furry black-and-white cat named Spike. Lately he was getting a bit tired and sleepy, but that would soon change.

The eccentric European seized a huge jug of yellow liquid with swirls of red in it. He brought it over and poured the whole mess on the black-and-white cat.

"Reeowwk!!" the cat squealed. "FFFT!!! FFFT!!!" Spike fired away like a hampster out of the oven.

Vladimir set up his super-telescope when he heard a noise. A giant puff of electrified black-and-white fur was racing toward his house at a tremendous speed. Spike had gone around the world in 6.3 seconds flat!! Vladimir guessed that the cat would go around the world for a few minutes and would then land. Swoosh!! Spike flew overhead and out over the horizon.

The next time around Vladimir noticed something different about Spike. He had a hampster in his mouth! And not just any run-of-the-mill hampster either. Sleepy! Spike had created such a static force about him that it had magnetically attracted Sleepy. As Spike and Sleepy went out over the horizon, Vladimir noticed that they started to gain altitude. He concluded that they would escape the earth's gravitational field and fly out into space.

The next week Vladimir had a party celebrating his triumph over the huge hampster. When the party was over, everyone complimented him on the good food and especially on the fine wine. There was something different about it, they said, a tinge of lemon or grape. Vladimir said good-bye and returned to his kitchen to do the dishes. He gasped when he saw the end of the world.

A tube of Hyper Hampster fluid (or fish, dog, cat, bird) had been left on the shelf, where it had dripped into the wine processor. Vladimir ran into the bathroom, took a handful of sleeping pills, and went to sleep.... He did not want to be awake for the fireworks.

*Matthew McCluskey*
*Helena Jr. High*
*Helena*

## MY NICHE FOR A WEEK

As in vacations past
my time will tie knots
around thoughts
of a week not meant for me.
I hope it rains—
hard.

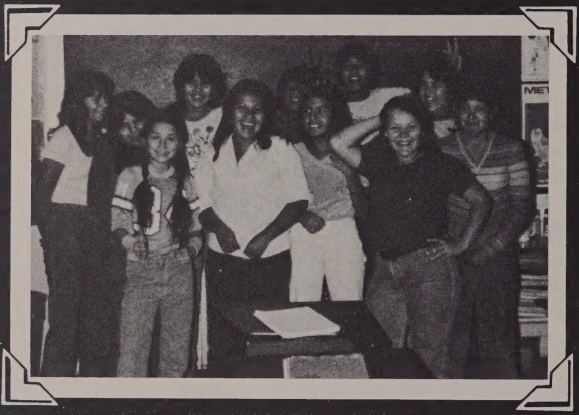
*Paul Hoffman*
*Helena High*
*Helena*

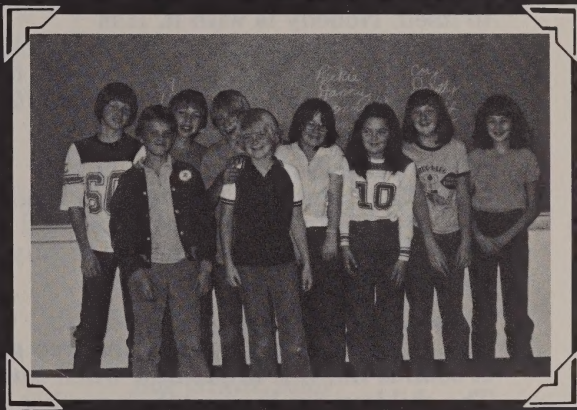
As I picked up the basketball
a floating satellite, I put my
mind to a deep concentration.
The groans of my gut
were in a spinning orbit.
Clutching the leather I threw it
to the clouds. It soared to the hollow net
but bounced back. Wails from the crowd
disintegrated in the air.
Hoping for the redemption of it I reached
out to space  the noise all faded as the ball
went sliding into my chest.
Success in my galaxy, into the air again.

*Heidi LaVoi*
*Havre Jr. High*
*Havre*

When the old man walked in stoned drunk
and started cursing with his breath so strong
"Where in the hell have you been?"
Waking me up and shuttering
like a loose window in a house
when a door was slammed. Saying to myself
"Why? You can have it."

*Pat Connolly*
*Sweet Grass County High*
*Big Timber*





## FAMILY LONELINESS

Music reminds me
of a fish going back and forth in a pond,
just dangling there. The fish sometimes sings
to itself. Nobody is with it. It is
all alone looking for food. When it finds some
it is very happy. But when it doesn't it goes
slow and soft and sings blue songs. Its voice
sounds like a trombone.

It met a friend and it is dancing
gaily. They sing together in high bright voices
that sound like violins and flutes and they get married
have children that have real high tiny voices that sound
like piccolos.

They are separated now by a death.
Just a widow and a mess of children growing up.
It sounds like a trumpet now when the lonely mother sings.
The children are leaving their mother and getting married
breaking the family apart again.
The widow cries just like a big tuba.

*Ronnie Weatherman*
*West Elementary*
*Laurel*

## MY NAME IS JOHN

This morning I woke up and took a shower.
Then I got dressed for work. I went back
into my room and I noticed I felt different.
Funny, not usual. I went and looked in the mirror
and I couldn't believe it was really me.
I look like John Travolta. Then my friends came over
and said is that you? Then I went walking down the street
I can hear people whispering wow who's that? Then I went
into the eighth grade classroom and the teacher said
who's that? I said eat your heart out. Then I went
to my wife and she fainted. I could hardly revive her.
Finally she came out of it. Darling is that you?
I went to bed and wondered if I could stay this way forever.

*Kimmy MacDonald Shyface*
*Frazer Elementary*
*Frazer*

## I FEEL RUST

Not brown,
Not
the smooth polished surface
of an oak table;
not warm, rich, fragrant earth—
living earth—
peaceful earth where silent things—
worms and maggots—reside.

I feel rust—
not orange,
not bright, juicy
sweet and sticky.
Not orange.

But rust—
the rust called bittersweet
in a box of crayolas.
Rust
eating away at the body of a car.
The rust of tired, old suede shoes.

*Amy Ransom*
*Shepherd High School*
*Shepherd*

## ABANDONED HORSE

You can see that a man
has been shot. And the horse
has been abandoned lonely and
scared the horse moves for shelter
in the trees the horse hears
the great horned owl.
This is a poem for lonely horses.

*Sandra Butler*
*Granville Stuart Elementary*
*Deer Lodge*

## BUTTERFLY

I flutter through the wind.
Clouds float above me like angels.
I'm isolated like a lone star in space.
As I look down I see a horse galloping free
I twist to see my reflection in the water.
My wings flutter and flut as I fly into the sunset.

*Poppy Gard*
*Monforton Elementary*
*Bozeman*

## FARMING

Farming, green like potato vines in July,
smells like plants blooming and freshly swathed hay.
It feels like cool tools in the shop, waiting.
It's slow moving, like combining grain or picking rocks.
It sounds like a big turbo-diesel pulling a heavy load.
It's bugs in your mouth as you ride a motorcycle,
irrigating.

*Jon Hocker*
*Ronan High*
*Ronan*

## A DREAM, KIND OF

I am standing in the kitchen doorway. My body is waving like seaweed in a strong current. No bones. Water rushes over me.

Then the waving stops and cold fear grows inside of me, from the inside core of myself. Fear colder than anyone has ever felt or will feel again. A demon. I am becoming a demon. My nose grows instantly into a long point. My fingers are claws, wicked and sharp. Evil burns in my eyes, and I am afraid. "No...no!" I look up and around, try to climb out of this evil body. But no. There is no escape from this. A vision of God. He's up in the corner, frowning down at me. I'm a tool in God's hand, connecting him with his lost creations. Alone, I'm weak. People are magical robots. They don't know. I can't walk on the lines. I lose my balance. The lines are moving. I can't.

It's gone. A vivid memory. I look for the comfort of friendship, but I must write the fear—so I will believe it. Someone is in my ear. Pressing on my shoulder, it won't let me write.

*Annie Reid*
*Bozeman Sr. High*
*Bozeman*

My father and I walk to the barn
stiff-legged from layers of clothes.
The cows are in the pasture
huddled together for warmth
their butts to the wind.
I hear the wail of a calf
looking for its mother.
The mother answers and
the calf is silent.
I then cry for my mother
but she isn't there.

*Duane Lincoln*
*Blue Sky High*
*Rudyard*

I remember putting my little brother
in my mom's dryer. Before I turned
it on he was just screaming around
but I forgot about him for about
20 minutes until I heard him screaming
but I was just going to leave him in there
but my mom made me take him out after that he
wouldn't play with me.

*Marlene Williams*
*Frazer School*
*Frazer*

**WATER**

Dips of water fall from the sky
into the white clear water.
Some fall into beautiful smelling roses.

*Karen Looker*
*Loy Elementary*
*Great Falls*

## STARS

The shower of the stars
shone like headlight beams
on napkins and satellites
like neon watercolors.

*Bernie Tatarka*
*Bozeman Sr. High*
*Bozeman*

## FEAR

It starts in the mind
a small feeling of uneasiness
but then it grows
spreads out like a plant to the sun
or the word of the lord.
But its sun is the moon and a dark night
and its land is the haunting whistle of the wind.
Its touch is icy like the fingers of death.
Its taste and smells are sour
bitter like spoiled milk
or an apple too long on the ground.

*Trish Brengman*
*Shepherd High School*
*Shepherd*

## MATH BOOK

I am a math book that is
full of terrible-looking problems.
I would not suggest tasting or smelling me.
I am green on the cover and
black and white inside. I am like Alexander the Great
conquering everyone.

*Jamie Willard*
*Plentywood Elementary*
*Plentywood*

## NIGHT CALL

Pine resin pops softly now in
The blue flames of the dying fire.
"There she goes again! I wonder what
Makes that noise?"
The men, sleepy after breathing hot dust
Of a long day packing up the mountain canyon,
Wonder. "A swallow!" "A bat hawk!"
Or a bat's wings through the air.

But silently, I know—
The voice makes me see,
Flying high through the slanted blue
Rays of twilight,
A young owl, dipping low
With its trebled voice dipping too,
Sending chills through our camp.

A call of youth, free, without
Contempt of mice or
Fear of men.
Playing, soaring, dancing
While the limelight of the world
Kisses its soft wings.

*Ginger Snapp*
*Bozeman Sr. High*
*Bozeman*

It makes me think of birds chirping
at the beginning. It makes me feel
lazy and bored by the seashore.
It makes me think of ships bellowing
in the night fog, and the Lawrence Welk orchestra.
It reminds me of trumpets busting wine glasses.

*Todd Webb*
*Monforton Elementary*
*Monforton*

## CLOUDS

The six brown clouds
murmured in the sky
as they floated
The sailboat drifts
on the ocean like a marshmallow
in hot chocolate. People
running shouting
"Rain! Rain! Get inside!"
Only the clouds know
what's going to happen.

*Michelle Corvison*
*Riverview Elementary*
*Great Falls*

## TENNIS SHOES

An old pair of tennis shoes
sitting on a railroad track
way away from town.
Brown from walking through recent muds
white shoe laces, torn and shattered
the inside filled with sand.
The wind is blowing uncommonly hard
a fog has come to its world
as they lay there
a train coming on.

*Karen Filipovich*
*Granville Stuart Elementary*
*Deer Lodge*

## ONCE I HAD A DREAM

A very wild dream
because three men in green
suits were chasing me.
One said, "Catch that kid!"
Another said, "and when we catch him,
let's eat him!"

*Brian Bernier*
*Paxson Elementary*
*Missoula*

## A RIDE IN THE BLIMP

We once rode in the Goodyear Blimp.
700 feet in the sky.
It was like standing
on top of the highest mountain.
Watching the gray skyscrapers
of Houston sway
back and forth.

*Lori Cole*
*Big Timber Elementary*
*Big Timber*

## THE DREAM

I once had a dream
I was getting married.
Just before the wedding
I put on my white dress
My sister drove me to the church
I was really getting nervous
My father walked me up the aisle
behind us there were 4 bridesmaids
and the matron of honor.
Soon I walked by the rest of my family
They were all happy and smiling
Then I saw Tim, that's the groom
standing in front of the altar
Then everytime I took a step
I went backwards
No matter how I tried
I just couldn't reach him.

*Michele Rose*
*Frazer School*
*Frazer*

## JEALOUSY

Jealousy works late nights,
A shaded light sways above
As a deaf mute painter grasps
Each perfect pigment from its place.
Jamming, twisting, he splays
Crayon-drawn rainbows
Down taut canvas, sour
From storage. Each stroke's crude smack
Evokes discord with the last,
Harmony with the deep, silent laugh
He mouths as he wipes his worn stubby fingers
Down his apron.

*Mike Colbrese*
*Teacher*
*Shepherd High*
*Shepherd*

## POEM LESSONS

A guy was in here today he
wants me to write a poem. I don't
want to write a poem. He says
to write it on something you have
to do, that someone makes you do.
So here is my poem.

I don't want to write a poem, but
I have to; sometimes I want
to write a poem and sometimes I don't.
It wears your finger out and makes you
write more, sometimes it makes you
hungry. But I still have to write a poem.

*Jim Applegate*
*Granville Stuart Elementary*
*Deer Lodge*

## I WISH

I wish I could be invisible
and watch T V all day
and eat all I want
and be lazy
and be rich
and fly like a bird
and breath underwater
and have hundreds of ice creams
and have a machine that makes caramels.

*Lane Timothy*
*Paxson Elementary*
*Missoula*

## THE TULIP

As I walk down the streets
I pass a flower shop.
I walk in to look around and I see
lots of flowers.
I find a pretty purple violet.
When I buy it, the storekeeper drops it.
It shatters on the floor.
I start looking again and I find
a beautiful tulip.
I buy it and plant it in my garden.
And there it sits looking
as if it is twitching in the wind.

*Janine Hyndman*
*Loy Elementary*
*Great Falls*

The seagulls rushing across the sky
the redish sand squishing up between
your toes like so many sponges
the scent of pine from the distant hills
drifting in the breeze
the light fading like many candles
being blown out one at a time.

*Kevin LaPointe*
*Plains Jr. High*
*Plains*

On the Smith River
There is a place
Where I swim.
The muskrat swam up to me.
His bronze coat
Shimmering
In the afternoon sun
We watched each other.
A rock rippled the surface.
The spell was broken.

*Jim Crawford*
*East Jr. High*
*Great Falls*

Mountains belong outside
I am inside
inside some old lady's bathroom
yellow flowers never die
in my foreground
snow never melts
the clouds make no movement

*Carl Pearson*
*Bozeman Sr. High*
*Bozeman*

I was hit
smack him back

heard water
smelled raspberries

clang of horseshoes

*Lee Estell*
*Havre Jr. High*
*Havre*

## SUZANNE

Suzanne has a plum red shirt and skirt.
She likes pizza. She has very soft hands
and one crumpled ear. She almost always wears
her hair in a bun. It looks like a candy bar
with carmel on it. Her eyebrows are faint.
her eyelashes touch her forehead. Her eyes
are like the ocean with a big black mark
in the middle.

*Sarah Murfin*
*Paxson Elementary*
*Missoula*

## THE ICE

I take my first step of the day
on the ice. It feels wonderful.
The coldness stabbing my arms and legs.
The feeling of helplessness
had left long before the age of six.
Now I'm thirteen.
My new skates glide perfectly
over the wet, shiny ice.
Someone calls my name as I turn
slip and fall. As I glide over
the ice, my blades put a loving mark
on the lonely, untouched ice.
Everything was new, my white skates,
the blue ribbons in my hair.
The blueish-pale ice gleaming,
shining like a new, perfect mirror.

*Kelly Purser*
*Loy Elementary*
*Great Falls*

## SNOW

When it falls it looks like diamonds.
A shade of white and silver.
It wounds like the time you are
at the principal's office
waiting to hear what's the matter
with you just waiting and waiting
and waiting. You get angry and finally
you walk into the office.
The door slams!
Nobody's there.
The room has an empty smell.

*Jennifer Sollars*
*Chief Joseph Elementary*
*Great Falls*

## IN THE CORRAL

Horses play like kids
racing at a trackmeet.
Running and throwing dirt
with their hooves.
Banging on the barndoor
for some grain like a visitor.

*Chad Forsum*
*Big Timber Elementary*
*Big Timber*

Waiting for a friend.
Waiting for a doctor's appointment.
Waiting for school to get out.
Waiting for school to get out.
Waiting to start the real day.
Waiting to grow old.
Waiting just to grow.
Waiting, patiently, for the world to begin.

*Tom Hansen*
*Bozeman Sr. High*
*Bozeman*

VILLANELLES

## POPLAR

Broken bottles glistening in the sunlight
Kids throwing rocks at church windows for play
Dogs sneaking through the alleys

A small and dirty town
Pain fills the drunks as they walk the streets
Broken bottles glistening in sunlight

A party town with keggers every weekend
East End Boys getting into trouble by moonlight
Dogs sneaking through the alleys

A reservation of mixed brown and white
That are not always together
Broken bottles glistening in sunlight

Tumbleweeds roll across the streets
And gather dust on Arcade corner
Dogs sneaking through alleys

Teenagers cruise as the sun goes down
Escaping parents and nightmares
Broken bottles glistening in sunlight
Dogs sneaking through the alleys

*Collaborative poem*
*Poplar High*
*Poplar*

## AUNTIE ELAINE

She's just a common city girl
precise and much too dainty for the country.
Her right pinky, as she eats, is alone and no help.
The hairdresser is busy with her bundle of black hair
every Thursday. Her long bright colored nails are trimmed.
They rip on the rickety wire fence to our field.
Auntie Elaine is terrified of the cow pies and the small
helpless water snake that slithers across her foot.
The ride in my uncle's plane was no fun to her
as he twirled around and spun circles.

*Gail Sampson*
*Ronan High*
*Ronan*

## I DREAMED

I was in a room
with an obnoxious clock that ticked so loud
I couldn't think.
As it ticked
the room filled up with Christmas cards.
They poured in through the windows
and door.
I backed into a bare corner
and watched.
After a few minutes
breathing was like trying to get air
from a small balloon.

*Wanda Dowdy*
*Bozeman Sr. High*
*Bozeman*

## TURNING INTO AN OWL

When I was playing softball
I was up to bat I ran to first base
then my feet fell off and grew talons
I ran to second and my arms fell off
and I grew wings
I ran to third and my eyes fell out
and I grew big eyes
then I ran home and was a bird forever.

*Shawna Gerke*
*South Elementary*
*Laurel*

click, a platinum blonde
orbits into a saze
somewhere past Atlanta.
watching like in a crystal ball,
lives a life, then,
click,
back to a lonesome table of people
again away from herself.

*Dave Marchwick*
*Bozeman Sr. High*
*Bozeman*

## FENCE POST

Day after day, I stand,
in my permanent spot,
as secure as a mountain
never to move again.

My life is the same everyday,
cars drive by, cows scratch
their maggots on me.

All I have to hold onto is
the cold wire on each side of me.

*Teresa Wilson*
*Bozeman Sr. High*
*Bozeman*

Being 11 is like being nothing.
Younger is diapery and pink
new teeth
bald bay
red face
blonde hair.

Older must be Bahamas or Hawaii
dust nice
morning dew
sunny skies
52 how nice can't wait.

*Krista Messmore*
*Chief Joseph Elementary*
*Great Falls*

## THE BIRD

It was getting dark
I saw a flake of snow
and there was a plain bird
on a branch
his feet were burning up.
It was silent.
It smelled moist.
It was getting white outside.

*Ben Bache*
*Plains Jr. High*
*Plains*

## RAIN STORM

I think about lilacs all washed down
I think about birds' nests all broken
I think about overalls on the clothesline
I can't get these things off my mind
It's all wrong today

*Tina Walker*
*Granville Stuart Elementary*
*Deer Lodge*

## LONELY DISCONTENT

Windows boarded up,
shutters clinging to their hinges,
shingles becoming loose and falling,
the chimney cracking and dropping bricks.
The house is gray and the weeds,
they are as gray as the house.

I lie in bed and listen,
the wind is blowing,
it is blowing through the house next door,
through the cracks in the side,
down the chimney and through the few broken windows.
A wailing sound it makes
announcing the house's discontent.

I think of its discontent.
It is because nothing haunts it,
except itself.
No spirits yell their presence.
It is sad, it's alone.
It is discontent.

*Drew Anderson*
*Shepherd High School*
*Shepherd*

He hid his belly behind
a newspaper on the bench waiting
for a Greyhound bus. Oh why do
so many maniacs carry knives
in their socks to separate the bodies
of their victims?

*Leslie Chambers*
*Belgrade High*
*Belgrade*

## LIBERTY

Lollipops
Inch Worms
Brides with Cake to
Eat, how Yummy, how Yucky
Roses for me
Toes to smell and
YoYo's to play with

*Liberty Lind*
*Paxson Elementary School*
*Missoula*

## THE BARN IN SUMMER

In the late afternoon I'd make my way
Out past blazing cornstalks and dry pumpkin vines,
To descend into the cool dusk of the barn.
Mildew and horse manure,
The frantic scamper of mice across rotted floorboards,
As they escaped into their own dark havens.
Then I would mount the narrow ladder
Wary of scraped knee and bumped head,
To emerge in dust and sweet dry grass.
The heat pounded on the naked steel roof
And tiny pieces of sun danced on a stage of pine planking.
I would scale the baled mountains and take
My well-worn seat by the big north window
To dangle my feet and survey the vastness of the world.

*Beth Murphy*
*Bigfork High School*
*Bigfork*

## THE REPTILE HOUSE

In the reptile house,
the gators, like
alien beasts, crawl
in the water, searching
for catfish to devour
as evolution takes a monstrous turn.

The red snakes writhe
and burrow into the mounds
of dirt behind their glass prisons
eternal seeking to
find darkness to hide
from prying eyes.

*Martin Holt*
*Havre Jr. High*
*Havre*

## PRETTY COCKATOO

Once there was a cockatoo. A pretty cockatoo it was. Ah, but prettiness isn't everything. I personally think it was too pretty. Because of his yellow belly, he was eaten up by a catfish. Then a gator with crippled leg came along and ate the catfish. Prettiness is still unlucky I say. Poor pretty cockatoo!

*Lisa Larrivee*
*Riverview Elementary*
*Great Falls*

jumped in the middle of a highway
once to see what people would do
i could hear a million cars screech
as i walked calmly to the other side

*Lisa DeCelles*
*Paris Gibson Jr. High*
*Great Falls*

This is the
only earth
we are going to get.

How strange to
stare straight up
into the stars
and think of
all the worlds
going about their
way.

*Dana Rowe*
*Paris Gibson Jr. High*
*Great Falls*

The weather changes with the seasons
fun is buried and gone, away
the grass grows green with emerald and jade
clouds roll jauntingly by
school trails out and on forever

*Todd Sundsted*
*Plentywood High*
*Plentywood*

## TIME WHITE

Smells like food inside the T.V.
no touch, only space around your hands.
The movement is the movement for people
on the moon—slow.
The sound is deafness, because you can't,
you can.
No taste—eating snowflakes—nothing there.

*Melody Olson*
*Ronan High*
*Ronan*

As I fall from the dark gray sky
the wind catches me and swirls
me around. Its harsh breath lets go
and I fall, landing hard
yet lightly upon the ground.
Waiting only to be joined by more
of myself. We fill the mountains
and meadows with white down.
Chilling little faces as they play.
Trying to catch us on their small
young pink tongues.

*Polly Olson*
*Sweet Grass County High*
*Big Timber*

## AGE

I rest
In my rocking chair
Near the fire, but
able to gaze out the east window.
Through the shading
Wisteria, I watch the
Jumping-jack children
In the yard, green with Spring,
They trample the star-like lawn
Daisies under sneakered feet,
Never tiring, loud for the
Joy of noise.

*Michelle Firpo*
*Bigfork High School*
*Bigfork*

Death is an eerie, queer
feeling. A feeling of emptimess.
Think of a black raisin-like coffin
being thrown into the ground
with you in it to be forgotten forever.
Drifting, drifting, and drifting
like a cobweb in a soft cloud
floating away forever.

*Elissa Walker*
*Chief Joseph Elementary*
*Great Falls*

The redwood tree
bore strange fruits like:
violet cucumbers;
baby's shoes;
and trucks which only bloomed
in spring and seemed
to fly.

*Melissa Halley*
*East Junior High*
*Great Falls*

## GRAIN BINS

Oozy oil on the steel,
razor-sharp edges
feel like a ton but only 30 pounds
raising with jacks pulling on chains
getting skin caught, pinched, cut and then
blood oozing out.
Yeah, it's finally done 25 more dollars today.

*James Wilson*
*Plentywood Elementary*
*Plentywood*

I see a big white swan floating gracefully
on the water.
I see a caterpillar creeping along
on a brick wall.
I see a man drinking whiskey
marching down the street
singing to every girl that passes him.
I see a girl in a white dress
riding a white horse with a carousel
that comes to life and gallops away.
I see a music box with a ballet dancer
in the background.
I see a royal coach with a king in it
going into town in a parade.
I see a girl walking in the field forever.
I see an elephant marching in a circle
in a circus.

*Jill Carl*
*West Elementary*
*Laurel*

As I travel on the train
to anywhere, the faint smell of oil
and sparks drift through the air
like a leaf down a slow creek.
I hear the clicking of the steel
as it meets steel. The window is fogged
but I see the snow and the trees
in the distance like beards of wheat
as I run from nothing. The blackness
of the night tells me it will soon be white.

*Kane Phillips*
*Blue Sky High*
*Rudyard*

I moved from Missoula
only to have my feelings
blown about the plains
like the tree's unwanted
leaves in autumn.

I had no friends, for
I came from a big city filled
with opportunities and smog.
Girls hovered over me,
vultures circled their prey.
Waiting for the opportunity
to pick at its weaknesses.

*Tammy Johnson*
*Plentywood High*
*Plentywood*

The computer using the current
putting out heat that makes it warm
groaning from its labor.
Talking rubbish that I don't know
and orbiting it. Platinum
running it with a ring
and a click working
with symbols and dreams.

*Bill Johnke*
*Havre Jr. High*
*Havre*

## SCHOOL

We enter this large building
a faint rumble from students
shuffling grows and grows
like a small tree in mid-summer.
The buzzer finally rings.
The rumbling and shuffling
grows to a bold black.
Then it all dies down
to a slight sound
of running water.

*Rob Wegenaan*
*Big Timber Elementary*
*Big Timber*

CAFE
IN GORDIES
GIFTS
JEWELRY
CAMERAS FILM BULBS
IMPORTS
NEWSPAPERS
DAILY & SUNDAY
NOTIONS, NOVELTIES
SUNGLASSES TOILETRIES
CIGARETTES LOTTERY TICKETS
8 TRACK TAPES & CASES
POST CARDS & STAMPS
PLEASE COME IN
ICE
Cafe
Welcome

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HOMEMADE POEMS. By Daniel Lusk. A handbook of imaginative techniques for teaching poetry-writing to children and adults. Lame Johnny Press, Hermosa, SD 57744.

THE LIVES OF CHILDREN. By George Dennison. Vintage.

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NEW SOUNDS IN AMERICAN FICTION. Gordon Lish, editor. Cummings Publishing Company, Menlo Park, California, 1969.

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WRITING AND KIDS. Transcript of two programs (# 182 and # 183) of "Options in Education," a regular National Public Radio broadcast. National Public Radio, 2025 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20036.

WRITING IN GENERAL AND THE SHORTSTORY IN PARTICULAR. Houghton Mifflin, 1977.

WRITING THE AUSTRALIAN CRAWL. By William Stafford. Views on writing and teaching creative writing, upper level. University of Michigan Press, P.O. Box 1104, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. (Other titles in this University of Michigan Press POETS ON POETRY SERIES present generally upper level material concerning writing and the teaching of writing. Books now in print by Robert Bly, Donald Davie, Donald Hall, David Ignatow, Galway Kinnell, Maxine Kumin, Diane Wakoski, and others.)

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# PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Belgrade High

Bigfork Elementary

Bigfork High

Big Timber:
- Big Timber Elementary
- Sweet Grass County High

Bozeman:
- Bozeman Sr. High
- Monforton Elementary

Colstrip:
- Isabel Bills Elementary
- Pine Butte Elementary

Columbia Falls:
- Deer Park Elementary

Deer Lodge:
- Granville Stuart Elementary

Frazer School

Great Falls:
- Chief Joseph Elementary
- East Junior High
- Loy Elementary
- Paris Gibson Jr. High
- Riverview Elementary

Havre Jr. High

Helena Jr. High

Helena High

Laurel:
- Fred Graff Elementary
- South Elementary
- West Elementary

Missoula:
- Paxson Elementary

Plains Jr. High

Plentywood Elementary

Plentywood High

Poplar High

Ronan High

Rudyard:
- Blue Sky High

Shepherd High

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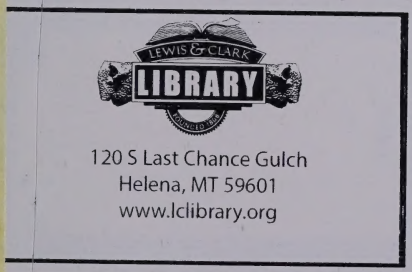


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